

Merchants of Midway

WILSON,  
J. M.  
1912

# Midway Businesses & Merchants

## Grocery Stores:

David Van Wagoner

Wilford " "

Wm " "

Watkins - <sup>post office</sup> Variety

Henry T Coleman

James Brigham Wilson

Gottfried Buckler

George Edmunston Bonner

Red "Red" Ivers

Rulon Huntington

Nielsen

Tri Mart

## Appliance Stores:

Guy Coleman

Pete "

Albert Kohler

Peddling & Meat Hawking (Butchering)

## Florists

Kenneth Kohler at former home & Swiss Flower Box

Carmen Kohler

Wilma Pope Kohler

## Theatres & Owners:

Reo -

Guy & Pete Coleman

## Gasoline Stations:

Bill Mair

Bob Miller

Noel Cook

## Shaved Ice Shops: at Toronto

## Saloons:

Professionals Drs., Lawyers, Teachers Engineers Draftsmen

Their bodies sleeping in their graves  
    'Til the resurrection morn  
Aunt Nannie, too, was called away  
    When nearly eighty-seven  
And everyone of us feels sure  
    That she is now in Heaven  
Because she kept the laws of God  
    As nearly as she could  
And trusted everyone she met  
    As all true Christians should.  
Those of her friends who yet remain  
    Still hold the memory dear  
And gladly meet to celebrate  
    Her Birthday every year.

At the peak of mining there were several Chinese cooks who hired in the area. "One Fan" was a beloved character who cooked at camps in the hills west of Midway. On one occasion young Nate Coleman came running to his father with an especially large piece of pie and exclaimed "Oh, Daddy, see what 'Parasol One' gave me."

Barber shops were operated at various times in Midway by Harry Bircumshaw, William Wheable, Thomas Hair, Mulholland Hair, Walter Van Wagoner and Bert Bonner.

John Mohlman and Mr. Kuhni repaired and made shoes.

Pool halls were operated by Erwin Alder, Walter Van Wagoner, Dow Epperman, Jack Derry and Keith Bronson.

When the railroads came to the area and transportation facilities improved many of the boarding houses closed.

The O'Neil hotel still stands on Midway's Main Street, used today as a private residence.

#### LIVERY STABLE

Only one livery stable flourished in Midway in the days before automobiles. The stable was established about 1909 by Simon Epperson. In earlier years, Mr. Epperson's father, Sidney H. Epperson, had kept a feed stable where travelers could stop for feed for their teams.

The Epperson stable was located north of the old Berkumshaw Building on a spot where William Gibson later operated a blacksmith shop. Mr. Epperson invested much in his livery stable and boasted fine quality horses and the best in harnesses, buggies and cutters.

Many of Midway's young couples courted in Epperson buggies and enjoyed Sunday rides in outfits from the stables. Workers at the mines also made good use of the services. When mining activity dwindled so did the livery stable business, and its end came when automobiles gained in popularity.

O'Neil's Hotel and  
graph are, left to  
ames Ritchie, Aunt  
rt Hair.

# List of Midway Merchants Through the Years

Bsp David Van Wagoner had a store on the SW corner of the present Town Square

Mrs James B Wilson had neighborhood store  
Henry Coleman Sr Store

William Watkins & Mary had a small wooden store in front of his home at No Center St.

— Bonner - Merc.

Albert Kohler appliances.

Lee Ivers' mercantile  
Huntington mercantile  
Nielson mercantile

Guy Coleman in Coleman's Store

Pete Coleman " " "

Midway  
Stores

add  
348-9  
552

rooms of new houses

R. RAYMOND GREEN, M. D.

PHYSICIAN & SURGEON  
SPECIALTY SURGERY  
48 SOUTH MAIN STREET  
HEBER CITY, UTAH 84032

PHONE 654-1822

*Early* HOSPITALS in

*Wasatch County:*

- Aberrett*  
*5* Lavina Murdock Hospital (*Nelson Murdock*)
- Bonit*  
*1* Lewis Alexander Hospital
- 2* ~~Lacy Duke Maternity~~  
*3* ~~Tennie Duke Home Hospital~~  
~~Soldier Summit Hosp~~  
Heber Hospital - (*Nielson Memorial Hospital*)
- Roosevelt*  
*Hosp ??*
- Lydia Hausey Rest Home
- Mark Haws Rest Home
- Jess Buckner Rest Home  
(Heber Valley Care Center)
- Long Term Care of Wasatch County Hospital

Pete Coleman  
Need <sup>good</sup> pick for  
Midway Merchant

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### *Seek Ye First...*

Religion was the mainstay in the lives of the early settlers along Provo Valley's Snake Creek. Nearly all of them left the security of homes and opportunities in the East and in foreign lands to cast their lots with the growing Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Through persecution and bitterness they had suffered in Missouri and Illinois, and now they were giving their lives to establish cities where they and their families could enjoy religious freedom.

Life was hard along Snake Creek, but never hard enough that the work couldn't be accomplished in six days of work a week. The Sabbath Day was reserved for worshipping, studying the Gospel and resting for the rigors of another week. Even before the first meeting house was built in the upper settlement in 1862 the people were meeting in each others' homes for worship services.

Just before the first meeting house was completed in July, 1862, Church authorities in the valley called Sidney H. Epperson to serve as Snake Creek's first presiding elder. He and his counselors, John Fausett and Samuel Thompson were sustained on June 26, 1862. These brethren also presided over the lower settlement until 1864 when David Van Wagonen was called as presiding elder there. His counselors were Andrew Hamilton and David Wood.

In 1866 because of Indian trouble the Saints of both settlements were advised to join ranks as one settlement in order to have the necessary strength for protection. A compromise location was chosen half way between the two settlements and the settlers, forted in, called the site Midway.

The first step in laying out the new settlement was the survey of the townsite. Sidney H. Epperson and John Huber carried the tape. Mark Smith and Attewell Wootton, Sr., the pegs, and within a few days Midway was laid out in ample blocks with the public square in the center.

Around the central square seventy-five primitive dirt-roofed log cabins sprang into existence, some abutting against each other while in some instances strong panels of upright posts made palisades between cabins built slightly apart, the whole forming an impregnable wall around the square. Small rear windows were to serve as portholes in case of attack. The fort was conducted under military law, having officers and picket patrols, arising and doing certain work at the call of the bugler, John Watkins.

546

These noble and Godfearing people now sensed the happiness of well provided security and felt they would be able to repel any attack of the Redman. Fortunately, the fort was never attacked; and when it was time to disband after a treaty had been made with the Indians and they had gone to live on reservations, most of the people decided to remain here. The upper and lower settlements were never rebuilt. The old fort was reserved by the town as a public square where meeting houses, schools, and stores were built.

Today a beautiful monument and marker erected by the Daughters of the Pioneers marks the scene and describes in a meager way the pioneering of this beautiful valley.

Under date of February 4, 1867, David F. Van Wagonen wrote from Midway that the winter had been comparatively mild with only 20 inches of snow and the thermometer only 4 degrees below zero at sunrise January 1, 1867. The health of the people was good and the past winter had not witnessed a single drunken person, nor heard of any riotous conduct in the whole valley, mainly because there were no distilleries or liquor shops.

The first grasshoppers were seen at Midway July 27, 1867.

December 29, 1867 Joseph S. Murdock was released as Presiding Bishop of Provo Valley and Abram Hatch was sustained in his place.

May 26, 1868 the first missionary from Midway, James Wooley Fisher, was set apart for a mission to Great Britain. He returned in 1869.

March 11, 1868 Sidney H. Epperson was reappointed by Bishop Abram Hatch as Presiding Elder of Midway with David F. Van Wagoner and Ira Norton Jacob as his counselors. The former counselors John Faucett and Samuel Thompson were released.

In 1868-69 a substantial rock building was erected at Midway on the southeast corner of the public square in which a good school was soon commenced. The house was built by taxation and was used for religious and other meeting purposes until 1874.

April 10, 1870 Sidney H. Epperson and counselors were released, and Henry Samuel Alexander was appointed Presiding Elder over the Midway Branch with David F. Van Wagonen and John Huber counselors.

In 1871 John Huber, the second missionary to be called from Midway, was called to the Swiss and German Mission, and Ira N. Jacob succeeded John Huber as second counselor to Henry S. Alexander. There were no further changes in the presiding officers until the organization of a ward in 1877.

In 1872 Elder George C. Lambert visited Midway, and he wrote the following interesting item which appeared in the Deseret News September 25, 1872:

"I arrived at this interesting little town last evening and contrary

547

to my expectations, found it to be a place abounding in interest and importance. Many residents of the territory are not aware of the existence of such a place; and although I am perhaps as well acquainted with the various towns and cities of the territory as any other person, having visited nearly every one, I had no conception until I came here of the location or magnitude of Midway. It is one of the most pleasantly situated towns I ever visited.

"Just now I see a man leading a pack horse loaded with boxes towards the mountains and am told that he is freighting butter and eggs for the citizens to the mines of Little Cottonwood, Big Cottonwood, and American Fork, distant from this place only nine miles over the mountains west.

"The small "Co-op" store here does a big business and the inhabitants of H. S. Alexander's ward are alive and very active. When the narrow gauge railroad now started between Echo and Coalville shall have extended on through this valley, the curiosities of this locality will be sought out by scientific men and curiosity seekers."

In 1873 the first tithing office was commenced. It was completed in 1874. Here Sunday School and other public meetings were held. Many wonderful entertainments were held here such as the Aaronic Priesthood Quorum which had an annual affair. They would meet in the tithing office and dance until about 11 P.M. Then they would go across the street to the school, which was on the southeast corner of the public square. There tables were set with the good things of this world.

Many Swiss people had arrived in the valley at this time. They organized a brass band under the direction of Andrew A. Burgener and built a music hall on the north of the public square where Dean Zenger's home now stands. They held their own L.D.S. meetings in this building conducted in the Swiss and German language by Gottlieb Kohler.

Among these later arrivals were Empey, Bunnel, Probst, Hasler, Murri, Haueter, Buhler, Barben, Remund, Kohler, Huffaker, Kummer, Schaer, Besendorfer, Gertsch, Sonderegger, Kennah, and others.

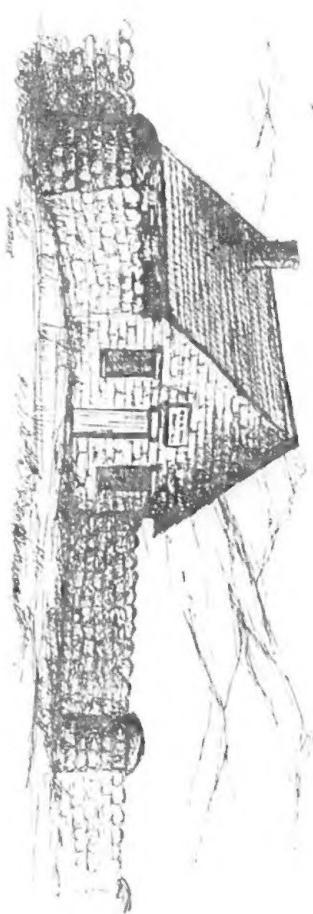
In 1877 Provo Valley became Wasatch Stake and Bishop Alexander was chosen as counselor to the Stake President, Abram Hatch, and at a special conference held July 15 of that year the Midway Ward was officially organized with David F. Van Wagoner as Bishop, John Watkins, 1st Counselor, and Alvah J. Alexander, 2nd Counselor.

March 23, 1878 John Huber was appointed clerk of the Midway Ward. The Church membership now numbered 625. They had outgrown the tithing office and school and a new meeting house was necessary. April 4, 1881 at 10:00 o'clock A.M. the cornerstones of Midway assembly rooms were laid with great ceremonies.

The southeast corner was dedicated by Bishop David Van Wagoner. The southwest corner by First Counselor John Watkins, the northeast corner by Second Counselor Alvah J. Alexander, the southwest corner

About the same time in 1886 a new tithing office was built. It was also built of native rock and measured 24 by 32 ft. with a small belfry on the north end. It was located where Reed Kohler's residence now stands. There was a root cellar underneath the building where potatoes, vegetables, etc., paid as tithing were stored. The back part was used as a granary for grains paid in tithing. At this time much of the tithing was paid in produce.

The front room was still used for various types of meetings and as an extra class room for Sunday School and Primary. The Relief Society also met there for many years. In the back part of the lot was the tithe barn. It was a great problem many times for the Bishop to convert the produce into cash before spoilage took place.



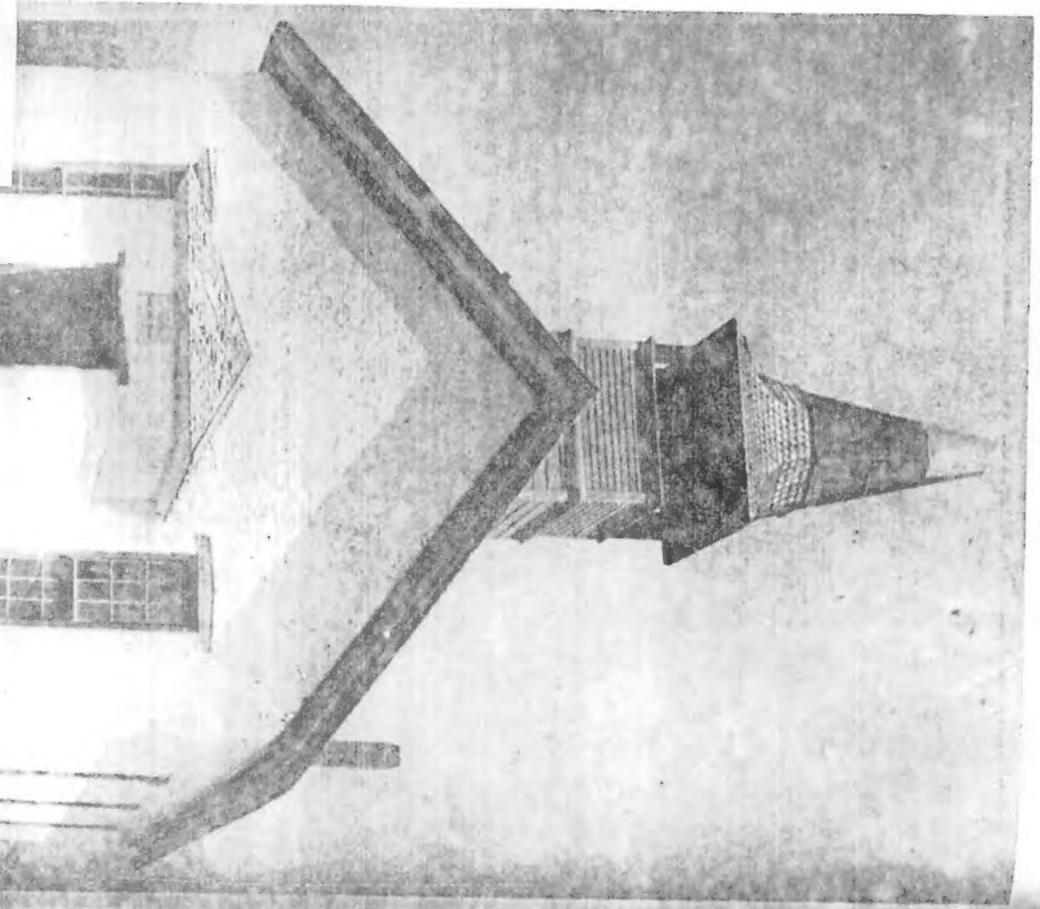
The old Midway Tithing Office as depicted in a sketch by artist Bill Whitaker

1888 was a very dry year for Provo Valley. Many of the old springs dried up. On June 11 there was no water at all in the Provo River bed between Midway and Heber. Because of the drought, there was only two-thirds of a crop raised in Midway.

In January, 1893 Bishop Van Wagoner asked for a release as Bishop of Midway Ward. January 29, 1893 John Watkins was ordained Bishop by Apostle John Henry Smith and Alvah J. Alexander, 1st Counselor, Conrad Abegglen, 2nd Counselor, John Huber, ward clerk and chorister.

At the Saturday session of stake conference held January 26 the Midway Choir sang four request numbers.

On the evening of January 27, after the close of the stake conference, Apostle John Henry Smith came to Midway with President Hatch and dedicated the new meeting house.



stones had been prepared by Johannes Sonderengh priests. At this time there were no other ward Elders were organized in a stake capacity. The first ward organ was purchased at \$125. The organ completed to such an extent that the first meeting was held in 1886; however, it was not dedicated until 1895. The building measured 60 ft. by 30 ft. and house in Midway, dedicated in 1895. It was built of native rock and It was built of native rock with a belfry at the end a big church bell, its beautiful, clear tones people to worship and tolling on sad occasions